

TAXPAYER PROTECTION ACT OF
2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, today marks a date that is familiar to most Americans: April 17th is the deadline for filing taxes. Like most Americans, I too can now breathe a sigh of relief because my tax return has been mailed to the Internal Revenue Service, IRS.

This year we were fortunate enough to have more time to file our taxes due to the normal tax day falling on the weekend and the Emancipation Day Holiday in the District of Columbia on Tuesday. While many filers will benefit from this extra time, millions of Americans will still ask for extensions to file due to their inability to understand the complicated tax regulations.

I am committed to a tax system that is fair to all Americans and to a system that is "taxpayer friendly." This is why I support efforts to simplify the tax code by closing loopholes, which will reduce the compliance burden. By simplifying our current code, we can increase compliance, and ensure our long-term fiscal stability. It is our duty to protect taxpayers and to provide a "user-friendly" government.

For this reason, I support H.R. 1677, the Taxpayer Protection Act of 2007. This Act requires the IRS to notify taxpayers of incidences of identity theft; prevents the wrongful use of one's name; permits the IRS to withhold information from the companies offering refund anticipation loans that are considered predatory; and gives taxpayers more time to collect money that was wrongfully held by the IRS. This legislation would help to protect taxpayers from unlawful acts that at times can be hard to detect.

Each year millions of families expect to receive money back from the government. However, they deserve to be receiving more; America's families and workers need tax relief. It should be a priority for Congress to assist families with the cost of childcare and long-term health care, eliminate the marriage penalty, help small businesses, and help Americans save for higher education and retirement. We need to develop a refundable tax credit for workers who earn reasonably low incomes. This is very important to helping the American people.

As a member of Congress it is our duty to ensure that taxpayers are being treated fairly and equally within our tax system. As the 110th Congress moves forward, I will work with my colleagues to ensure that this goal is achieved.

That is why I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1677, the Taxpayer Protection Act of 2007. I want to thank Congressman RANGEL and Congressman LEWIS for introducing this vitally important legislation.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. CHARLES HOSPITAL

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to celebrate a major anniversary and an irreplaceable institution in New York's First Congressional District, St. Charles Hospital.

Established in 1907 by four sisters with a mission to provide compassionate care for those in need, St. Charles Hospital has evolved into a state of the art community hospital serving tens of thousands of patients. The hospital has established itself as a nationally recognized center for rehabilitation, providing specialized rehabilitation services for pediatric patients, stroke victims, and a variety of other debilitating diseases.

This year, St. Charles Hospital celebrates its 100th anniversary. After a century of dedicated service to the community and millions served, the hospital has remained loyal to its founding mission of compassionate care for the underserved.

Madam Speaker, there is an Arabic proverb that says: "He who has health has hope; and he who has hope has everything." On behalf of the residents of New York's First District, I thank St. Charles Hospital for providing health and hope to all of us. I congratulate them on their 100th anniversary and I hope they continue to improve the lives of Long Island's residents for years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PASSING
LIEUTENANT COMMANDER
KEVIN J. DAVIS, UNITED STATES
NAVY**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to recognize the life and accomplishments of Lieutenant Commander Kevin Davis, United States Navy. LCDR Davis passed away over the weekend in service to our Nation in Beaufort, South Carolina. He was flying Blue Angel Number 6, known as the "opposing solo" position.

A qualified F-14 and F/A-18 pilot, a veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom with more than 2,500 flight hours and 200 carrier arrested landings, LCDR Davis joined the Blue Angels in 2005 and was well-liked and respected by the entire Blue Angels team. He joined a long line of distinguished Navy and Marine Corps Aviators with his selection to the elite performing squad. His dedication to the Navy during his operational tours and his time with the Blue Angels is something I hope all naval aviators look to as a fine example and a goal to pursue.

Formed in 1946, the Blue Angels have awed and inspired hundreds of millions of Americans and certainly led young men and women into the naval service. Since the creation of the team, 26 of our brave Blue Angels have given their lives. While we mourn all of

these losses, I am reminded of how selfless the service is from the members of our military and am confident Kevin was no exception.

I am privileged to serve the people of the First District of Florida and boast to my colleagues that I represent the home of the Blue Angels. This is not lip service. My constituents and I take justifiable pride in knowing we are friends and neighbors with people who represent so much of what is good with our country. I have met many of the "Blues" and unfortunately, I did not get the chance to meet Kevin. I know if I had, he would have impressed me, and I would have been better having known him.

In this time of deep sadness in Pensacola and on our beloved Naval Air Station, Vicki and I will keep LCDR Davis, his family, and our military in our thoughts and prayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I was not able to be present during consideration of H.R. 1275, the Shareholder Vote on Executive Compensation Act. I was not present for rollcall votes 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243 and 244. Had I been present, on rollcall 236 I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall 237 I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall 238 I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall 239 I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall 240 I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall 241 I would have "nay"; on rollcall 242 I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall 243 I would have voted "yea" and on rollcall 244 I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO EARTH DAY AND
ARBOR DAY**HON. ADRIAN SMITH**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, earlier this week, our Nation joined together to celebrate Earth Day and this Friday people around the world will celebrate Arbor Day, which as you may know originated in my home state of Nebraska.

This is an opportunity for us to take a look at the impact we each have on our environment.

I represent Nebraska's Third Congressional District, where agriculture is a way of life. I'm proud to say that farmers and ranchers were our country's first environmentalists, maintaining and improving the soil and natural resources to pass on to future generations.

Just as businesses make every effort to improve their services and products, the stewards of the land make use of modern technology and age-old techniques to protect their land and their stock.

We are fortunate to live in a time in which we understand the world around us as never before. We have access to technology to both protect the environment and to encourage innovation. We have the opportunity to engage

in meaningful dialogue on how to confront our changing climate and other environmental concerns without hamstringing the agriculture industry.

This week, as we celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day, let us appreciate the beauty of nature and renew our commitment to protect the environment for generations to come.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE
HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE
HONORABLE JUANITA MILLEN-
DER-MCDONALD, MEMBER OF
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF
CALIFORNIA

SPEECH OF

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 23, 2007

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I wish to join my colleagues in expressing my sorrow over the passing of JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD, the representative of California's 37th Congressional District. My thoughts and prayers go out to her constituents, her friends, and her family.

Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity to get to know JUANITA during the 109th Congress when we both served as members of the Committee on House Administration. While some might view oversight of election law and the day-to-day functions of the House as relatively uninteresting, I know that I do not, and I know that JUANITA, who served as ranking member at the time, did not think them trivial either.

Whatever topic was before the committee, JUANITA was dedicated to assuring that things were done fairly, properly, and effectively. She was vigorous in guaranteeing the integrity of the Federal elections process and was committed to ensuring that every eligible voter had free and unfettered access to the voting booth. Likewise, in her oversight of managing the House, she wanted to ensure that everyone on Capitol Hill had a safe and secure place to work or visit, while preserving the grandeur of the Capitol and the surrounding buildings.

This tenacity was something she demonstrated throughout her life, not just during the decade she spent in Congress. After raising her five children, she continued her own education, earning a bachelor's degree at the age of 40. She followed that up with a master's degree in educational administration. She was no stranger to hard work, and she was not afraid to take on a challenge.

One of JUANITA's most notable accomplishments occurred earlier this year. In January, she became the first African-American woman to chair a committee in the House of Representatives. It was something that made many Members of the House very proud, and it was a tremendous accomplishment for a woman whose life was full of monumental achievements.

I think it speaks volumes of JUANITA's dedication that she was here voting in this House, representing her constituents, until less than a month before cancer took her life. In fact, almost none of her colleagues were aware of her illness and how serious it had become until the week before she passed away. And through it all, she held a warm spirit and a kind smile.

Madam Speaker, I join my colleagues in sorrow for JUANITA's passing, and I again express my condolences to JUANITA's family, friends, and constituents.

IN MEMORY OF ANDREW ALBERT
ESPARZA, IRVING POLICE DE-
PARTMENT

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Officer Andrew Albert Esparza and in honor of his life dedicated to service and public safety.

Andrew passed away on April 13, 2007 in a fatal car accident while on his way to assist another officer. After graduating from the University of Texas in Arlington with degrees in business marketing and Spanish, Andrew followed in his brother's footsteps by joining the Irving Police Department in 2005. He was recently selected to join the SWAT team on a part-time basis and always made himself available as a Spanish translator. Though he was only with the Irving Police Department for 2 years, Andrew demonstrated great promise with expertise, maturity, and professionalism beyond his years of experience.

He is survived by his parents, Rafael and Christina of Fort Worth, TX; two brothers, Rafael Esparza, Jr. and wife, Jennifer of Irving, TX; Felix Esparza and wife, Haylee of Burleson, TX; sister, Zoe Esparza of Burleson, TX; grandparents, Lydia Garcia of Fort Worth, TX; Lazaro and Olivia Cantu of Fort Worth, TX; and nieces and nephews, Saeya, Sloan, Slade, and Rylee Esparza.

He will be remembered as a compassionate officer, a dedicated family man, and a devout Christian. May God bless all those he loved, and may I convey to them my sincerest condolences and the gratitude of the American people.

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN H. SIMS, JR.

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate John (Jack) Sims on the occasion of his retirement from the Department of Veterans Affairs, after more than 35 years of dedicated service. Jack will be greatly missed, and I join his many friends, co-workers and the veterans he served in wishing him the best of luck in the next phase of his life.

Jack's service to our country began in 1963, when he joined the United States Army. He began his VA career at the Martinez, California VA Medical Center in 1971 as an accountant trainee. Jack has held many positions in the VA across the country including Chief of Fiscal Service at VA Medical Centers in Washington, Illinois and California; Associate Center Director at VA Medical Centers in Oregon and New York; and Health System Administrator with Veterans Health Services and Research Administration in Albany, New York.

For the past 17 years, Jack has served as the Director of the Togus VA Medical Center. Under his leadership, the number of Maine veterans receiving care at Togus has increased from 13,000 to 33,000. Jack has also supervised the creation, relocation and renovations of six community-based outpatient clinics and two off-site mental health clinics to care for Maine's rural veteran population.

As Director, Jack and his dedicated staff of more than 1,000 VA employees have helped transform the Togus VA Medical Center into one of the best medical centers in the VA system.

Jack will be missed for his dedication and for his compassion by the veterans of Maine. I am pleased to join his colleagues, his family, and his friends in congratulating Jack on this milestone. I wish him a rewarding and enjoyable retirement.

NINETY-SECOND COMMEMORATION
OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

SPEECH OF

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 23, 2007

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, today, April 24th, marks the 92nd anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. I rise today to commemorate this terrible chapter in human history, and to help ensure that it will never be forgotten.

On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government began to arrest Armenian community and political leaders. Many were executed without ever being charged with crimes. Then the government deported most Armenians from Turkish Armenia, ordering that they resettle in what is now Syria. Many deportees never reached that destination.

From 1915 to 1918, more than a million Armenians died of starvation or disease on long marches, or were massacred outright by Turkish forces. From 1918 to 1923, Armenians continued to suffer at the hands of the Turkish military, which eventually removed all remaining Armenians from Turkey.

We mark this anniversary of the start of the Armenian Genocide because this tragedy for the Armenian people was a tragedy for all humanity. It is our duty to remember, to speak out and to teach future generations about the horrors of genocide and the oppression and terrible suffering endured by the Armenian people.

We hope the day will soon come when it is not just the survivors who honor the dead but also when those whose ancestors perpetrated the horrors acknowledge their terrible responsibility and commemorate as well the memory of genocide's victims.

Sadly, we cannot say humanity has progressed to the point where genocide has become unthinkable. We have only to recall the "killing fields" of Cambodia, mass killings in Rwanda, "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the unspeakable horrors in Darfur, Sudan to see that the threat of genocide persists. We must renew our commitment never to remain indifferent in the face of such assaults on innocent human beings.

We also remember this day because it is a time for us to celebrate the contribution of the